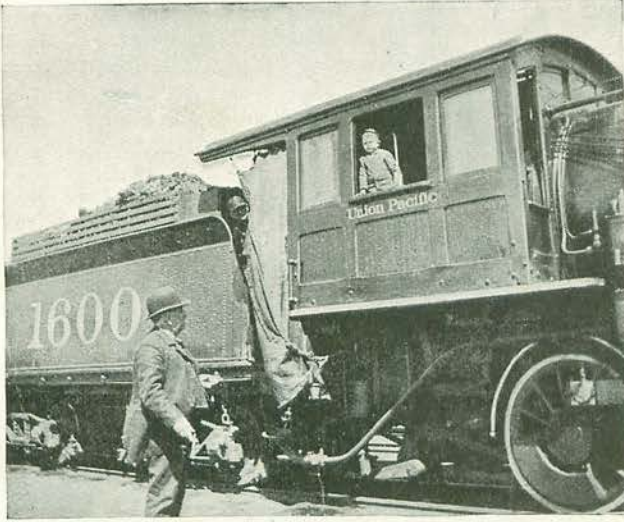


The Youngest Engine-Driver in the World.

BY GEORGE DOLLAR.



THE YOUNG ENGINE-DRIVER READY TO START ON A MOUNTAIN RIDE.
From a Photograph.

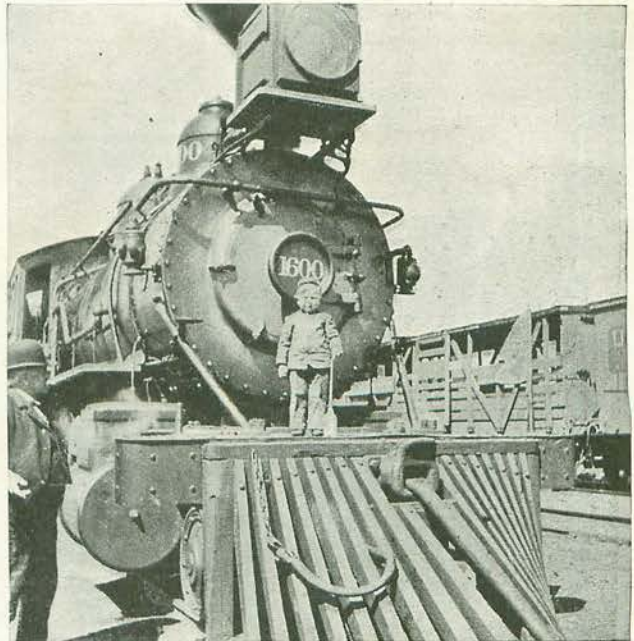


HE "Brownie Engine-driver," as the people in the West know him, is a real person, aged four. His full name is Hume Gibson Richards, and he lives with his grandfather, Mr. Henry A. Richards, at Laramie, Wyoming. To everybody he is known as "Buster," and there is not an engine-driver on the Union Pacific system, popular as they all are, who possesses half the popularity owned by this diminutive throttle-holder. He is, indeed, the pride of his friends and a wonder among boys—the greatest little man on the railways of America.

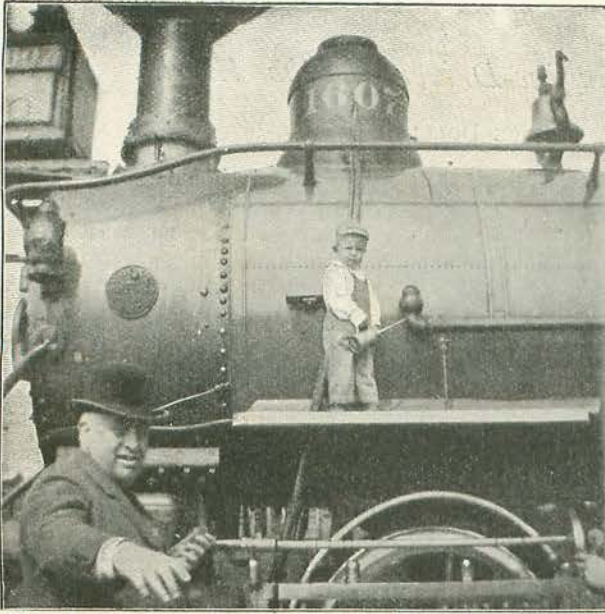
Many will think this boy can't run a train. Well, in the parlance of one of his friends, "You just ought to see him try!" Of course, he is not hired by the railroad to run a fast express, because passengers might object to so much responsibility on such

youthful shoulders. But what he doesn't know about the parts of a locomotive is hardly worth acquisition. He is as much at home near the boiler of a big express locomotive as he is in his own little bed, and a speed of fifty or sixty miles an hour, either at midday or midnight, has no terrors for his manly little heart. He has even been known to go to sleep beside the boiler of an express running at sixty miles an hour.

We must all admit that "Buster" makes a remarkable and commanding figure as an engine-driver. His regulation suit of overalls, and his oil-can, almost as large as himself, are attractive and conspicuous as he stands at the cab-window of No. 1600 on the Union Pacific, ready for a spin. This first photograph was taken just before No. 1600 started with



THE YOUNG ENGINE-DRIVER IN CHARGE OF THE UNION PACIFIC LOCOMOTIVE.
From a Photograph.

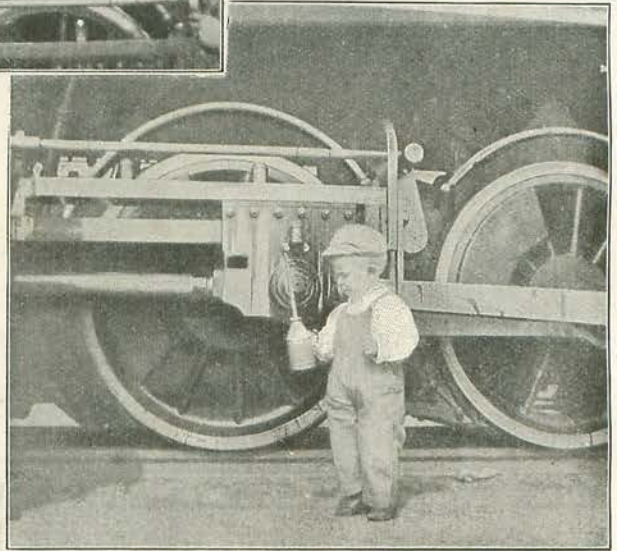


From a "OILING AROUND." [Photograph.

"Buster" on a trip over the highest mountain on the U.P. system, 8,240ft. above the level of the sea.

The youngster's face was at the time brimming over with smiles at the prospect of the trip. But the magnitude of his duties made him serious and important when the photographer dared to "snap" his victim. It was, indeed, a gala day for "Buster." Previous to the start he allowed himself to be

photographed while performing the various familiar acts of the engine-driver, all of which he can do as expertly as the grimmest old "hand" on the road. He stood in posture of pleased command on the cow-catcher of the locomotive, as shown in our second illustration, his little figure contrasting strangely with the mighty mass of iron strength behind. Then he "oiled around," holding his oiler at a real mechanical cant, and running about the boiler as if he had been doing it for twenty years. It was amusing to watch the energy which he put into his work, and the interest on his boyish face. Most marvellous of all was



HE HAS JUST FINISHED OILING.
From a Photograph.



CAR ON ONE OF THE "BUSTER'S" TRAINS EXPLODED BY ROBBERS WITH DYNAMITE.
From a Photo. by Mr. D. F. Linneen, Chicago.

that he kept clean. Not a spot to speak of on his clothes, not a smudge on his face—two facts that entitle him to the honour of being the cleanest engine-driver in the world, as well as the youngest.

It was on a trip like this that the disaster occurred

\$18,000.00 REWARD

Union Pacific Railroad and Pacific Express Companies jointly, will pay \$2,000.00 per head, dead or alive, for the six robbers who held up Union Pacific mail and express train ten miles west of Rock Creek Station, Albany County, Wyoming, on the morning of June 2nd, 1899.

The United States Government has also offered a reward of \$1,000.00 per head, making in all \$3,000.00 for each of these robbers.

Three of the gang described below, are now being pursued in northern Wyoming; the other three are not yet located, but doubtless soon will be.

DESCRIPTION: One man about 32 years of age; height, five feet, nine inches; weight 185 pounds; complexion and hair, light; eyes, light blue; peculiar nose, flattened at bridge and heavy at point; round, full, red face; bald forehead; walks slightly stooping; when last seen wore No. 8 cow-boy boots.

Two men, look like brothers, complexion, hair and eyes, very dark; larger one, age about 30; height, five feet, five inches; weight, 145 pounds; may have slight growth of whiskers; smaller one, age about 28; height, five feet, seven inches; weight 135 pounds; sometimes wears moustache.

Any information concerning these bandits should be promptly forwarded to Union Pacific Railroad Company and to the United States Marshal of Wyoming, at Cheyenne.

**UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY,
PACIFIC EXPRESS COMPANY.**

Omaha, Nebraska, June 10th, 1899.

TELLS ITS OWN STORY.

which is graphically shown in our concluding illustrations. The facsimile shown herewith tells the whole story of this not unusual incident in Western railroading. Six robbers held up the Union Pacific mail and express train ten miles west of Ross Creek Station, in Albany Co., Wyoming, on the morning of June 2nd, 1899. The car was blown up by dynamite, and the bandits robbed the safe of, it is said, from sixty-five thousand to one hundred

and twenty thousand dollars, but the size of the reward offered for the bandits, dead or alive, leads one to think that the total amount of money stolen was much larger. At all events, the robbers at the time of writing had got clean away, leaving behind them but a complete wreck of a valuable car, and a battered safe which lay for some time empty and conspicuous near the line. The rifled safe was a great attraction to the children of the neighbourhood, and a



TOP VIEW OF SAFE.

From a Photo. by Mr. D. F. Linneen, Chicago.

board had to be placed across the top that the children might not fall through. In our last photograph the young engine-driver and his sister are shown on top of the safe. There is a placid expression on their countenances, which show a remarkable fearlessness of the perils of railroading out West.

The cleverness of this boy of four is shown by his ability in other directions than engine-driving. Before he was three years old, so his grandfather writes, "he could tell all the names of the prominent generals and admirals of the United States Army and Navy, and the battles they had fought. At three and a half years he

could tell every nation on the globe, and the names of its inhabitants. He can name every State, river, lake, territory, on the North American Continent, and knows many parts of South America. For the benefit of the parents I wish to say that this child has received all his information without shedding a tear. I have been patient with him, never forced him, and was always kind. If he gets tired I stop. The result is, I am the one that gets tired, answering his questions."

These facts were sent to us by Mr. Richards in a letter written "while I am waiting for the 'fast mail,' which will be here at 1 a.m., with the little engine-driver on it." That day the boy had taken the trip over the highest mountain of the Rockies, the start of which was shown in our first illustration, and he arrived at Laramie at 1.20 a.m. on June 12th. "His grandmother," says Mr. Richards, "has given him some lunch, and is washing him and putting him to bed." No engine-driver of maturer years will read this touching account of a home reception and not wish that the Fates would treat him likewise.



"BUSTER" AND HIS SISTER ON TOP OF THE RIFLED SAFE,
From a Photo. by Mr. D. F. Linneen, Chicago.